



## A Quick Guide 5 good reasons why your organisation needs ISO9001:2008

There are numerous reasons why Senior Managers should take ISO9001 seriously, too many to cover in this quick guide, but before sharing the top 5 let's be clear on why you shouldn't implement ISO9001:2008!

### A really bad reason for implementing ISO9001:2008

Many companies implement quality management systems and undertake ISO9001:2008 certification because their customers have asked them to (or even demanded it). But implementing ISO9001 purely to save a contract or to win one could hurt your business. Forcing an ill-conceived and/or badly communicated QMS on your employees will be disruptive, create cynicism and damage morale.

Worse still, some companies have a mistaken belief that existing processes have to be changed 'to fit the standard' or to satisfy external auditors, resulting in working practices becoming less efficient and effective.

So if having a certificate on the wall to keep customers happy isn't a good reason, why should a company invest so much time, money and effort in ISO9001:2008?

### 1 100% Customer Satisfaction

Embracing the ISO9001:2008 continual improvement ethos focuses your company on meeting customer requirements - greater efficiency and consistency in your processes means fewer failures in your products or services resulting in a lot less complaints, rework and waste. Better yet, your customer has confidence that your company works to a minimum standard.

### 2 It can save you a lot of money

If you have a common system of consistent and repeatable processes that's understood across the company then you will quickly know when and where things are going wrong. You can stop spending money or wasting time on old, chronic problems - because implementing the 'Plan-Do-Check-Act' approach of ISO9001:2008 means you will have resolved them. And if new problems occur, then you'll have robust processes and a systematic way to identify and resolve them faster.

A well deployed QMS means your people will be clear about what they do and how it has to be done. They'll no longer spend time making up their job as they go along, trying to find things out, reinventing the wheel or duplicating effort.

ISO9001:2008 is an effective means to drive cost-savings into your business - fewer nonconforming products (or services), less rework, less rejections and streamlined processes.

### 3 Better management decision making

Better reporting means you know how well your business is doing. So as part of designing and documenting processes it's important to create meaningful measurements, metrics and key performance indicators. This information, coupled with the results from audits and process reviews, will provide you with powerful data so you can take a factual approach to decision making.

### 4 Increased employee satisfaction

A well designed and communicated ISO9001:2008 programme should make your people feel more involved in how the company operates. Defined roles and responsibilities, management accountability and established training procedures can really motivate people - so make it clear to your staff how they affect quality and contribute to the overall success of the company.

### 5 It gives you a competitive edge

Studies have shown that companies with an effective QMS perform financially better than those without one. Plus, raising the level of your company's financial and operational performance above and beyond your competitors' is no bad thing.

*OK, there is another reason...*

### 6 Existing & potential customers want ISO9001 approved suppliers!

Now that we've established some really good internal benefits of implementing ISO9001:2008, I'll concede that being able to meet customer demand for the standard is an added competitive advantage. ISO9001 certification is a useful promotional tool highlighting your company's commitment to quality and continual improvement. And because it's an international standard valued around the world it can also give your company access to new markets.

It's well worth dividing your customers into those who require ISO9001:2008 and those who don't and then working out how much business you do with those companies, that way you can work out the financial value of holding a certificate.

Designing and implementing an effective quality management system isn't cheap. So if you're going to go to the trouble of doing it then it's worth making sure that your business realises all the benefits.

*Altremis Ltd is an innovative consultancy based in the UK. We integrate proven business improvement techniques into our clients' organisations and use ISO9001:2008 to deliver effective quality management systems that create competitive advantage.*

George Forrest - Managing Director of Altremis Ltd